



Bumps in the Road

Lessons from 2022 Population Estimates



July 2023

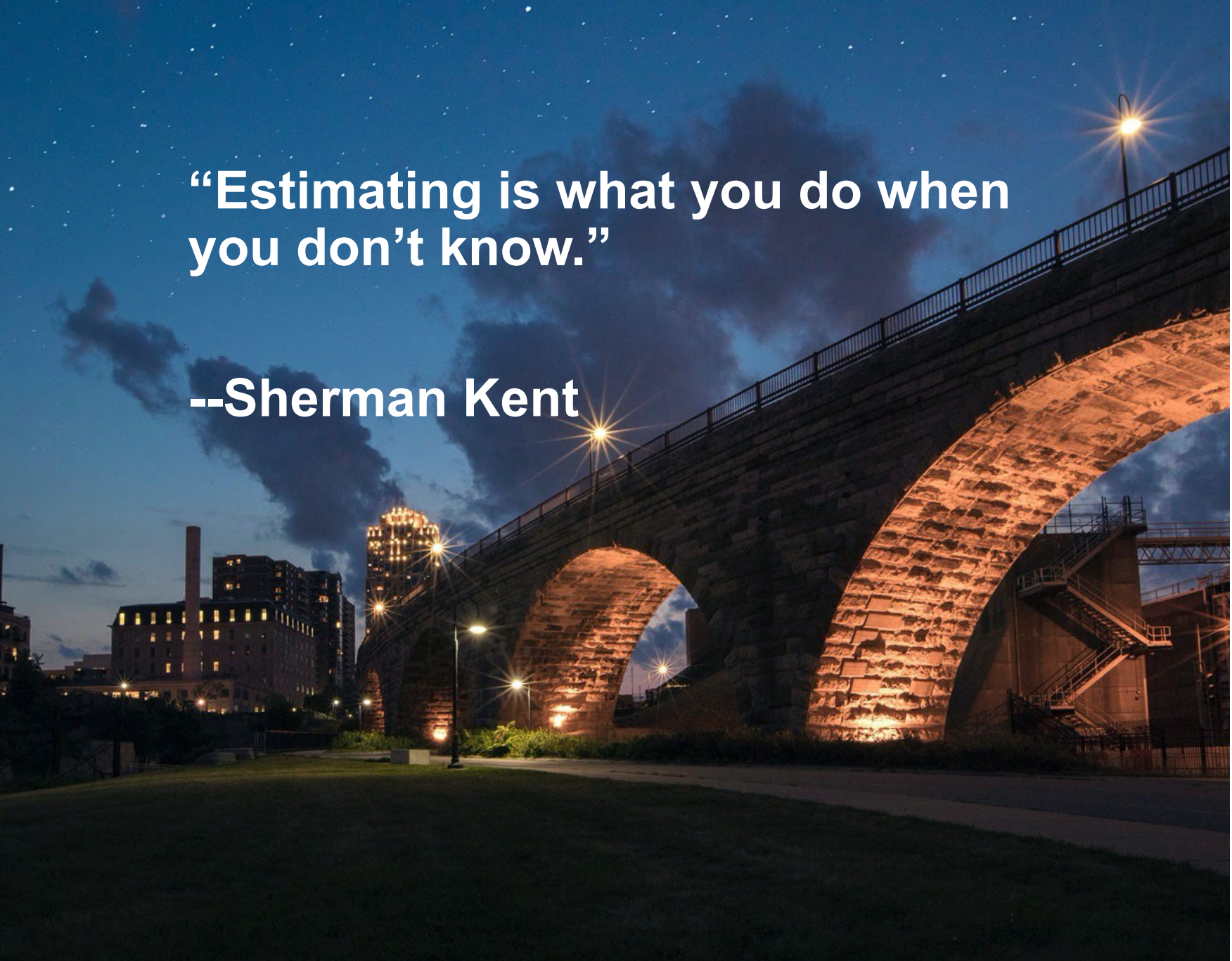
Matt Schroeder

metro council.org

Today's plan

Outline

- About population estimates
- Slower, less balanced growth
- Why is population growth slower?
- Metropolitan Council vs Census Bureau estimates
- Looking ahead



“Estimating is what you do when you don’t know.”

--Sherman Kent

What estimates are (and are not)

Decennial Census

- Complete count of people
- Every 10 years
- Limited characteristics

American Community Survey (ACS)

- Sample of people
- Every year
- Detailed characteristics

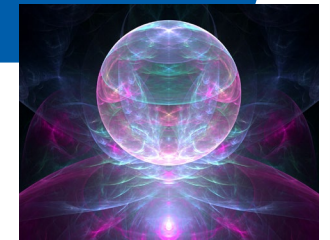
Population Estimates

- Best approximation of population *last year*
- Every year
- No characteristics



Many other inputs

Forecasts (Future decades)



Who is involved in creating estimates?

- Population estimates for seven-county region

Metropolitan Council



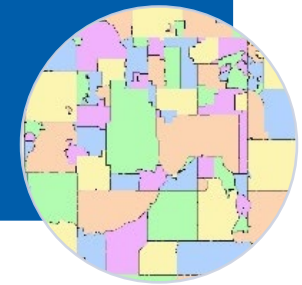
- Population estimates for Greater Minnesota (outside 7-county region)

State Demographic Center



- Supply data
- Review preliminary estimates
- Comment if desired

Local governments



Population estimates are governed by Minnesota Statutes [4A.02](#) and [473.24](#).

Population estimates timeline

Preliminary estimates (by June 1)

- Email and paper mailings
- Detailed reports
- Spreadsheets

Local review (by June 24)

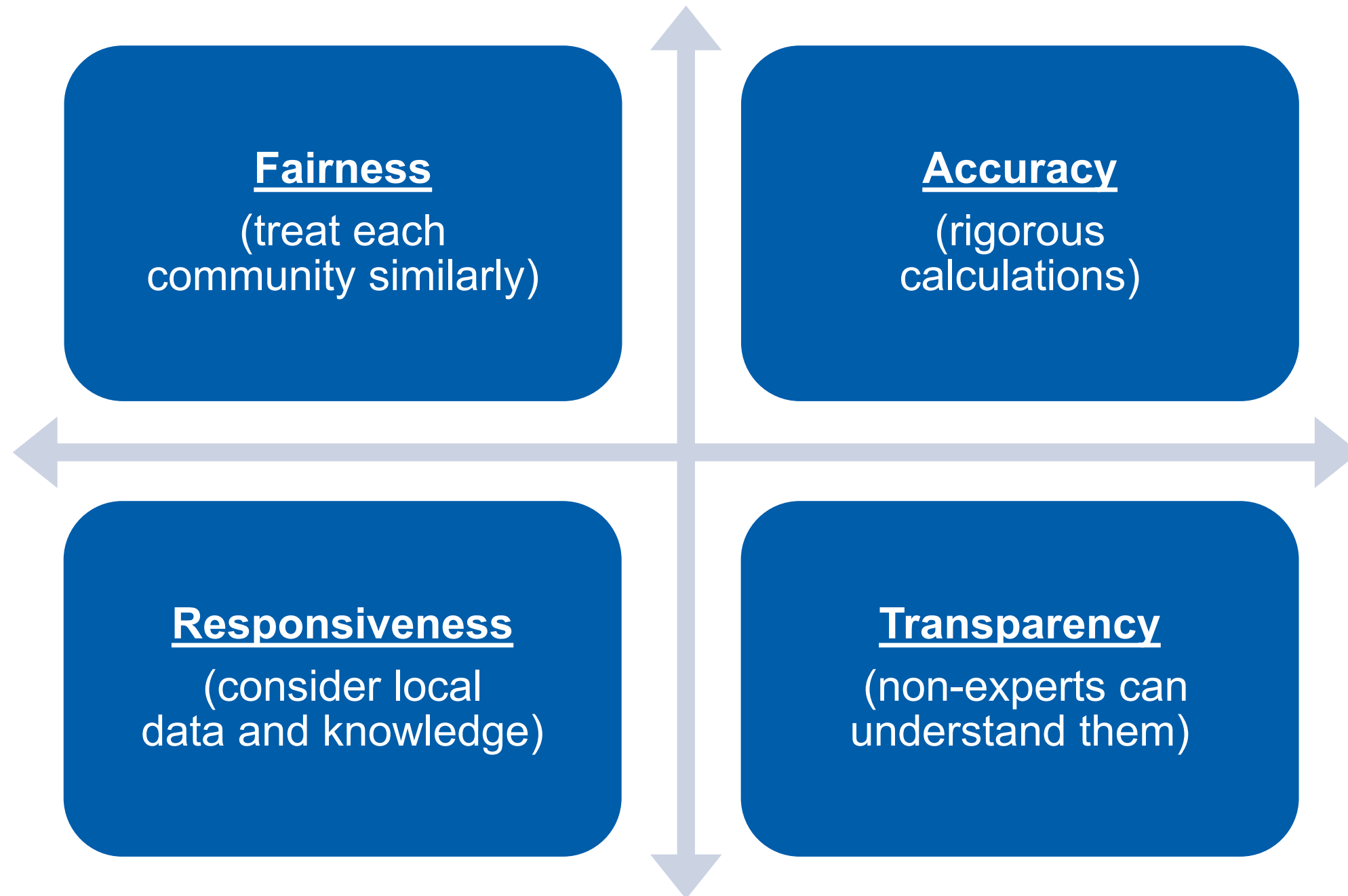
- This year:
- Four comments resolved by answering questions
 - Four comments resulting in edits

Final estimates (by July 15)

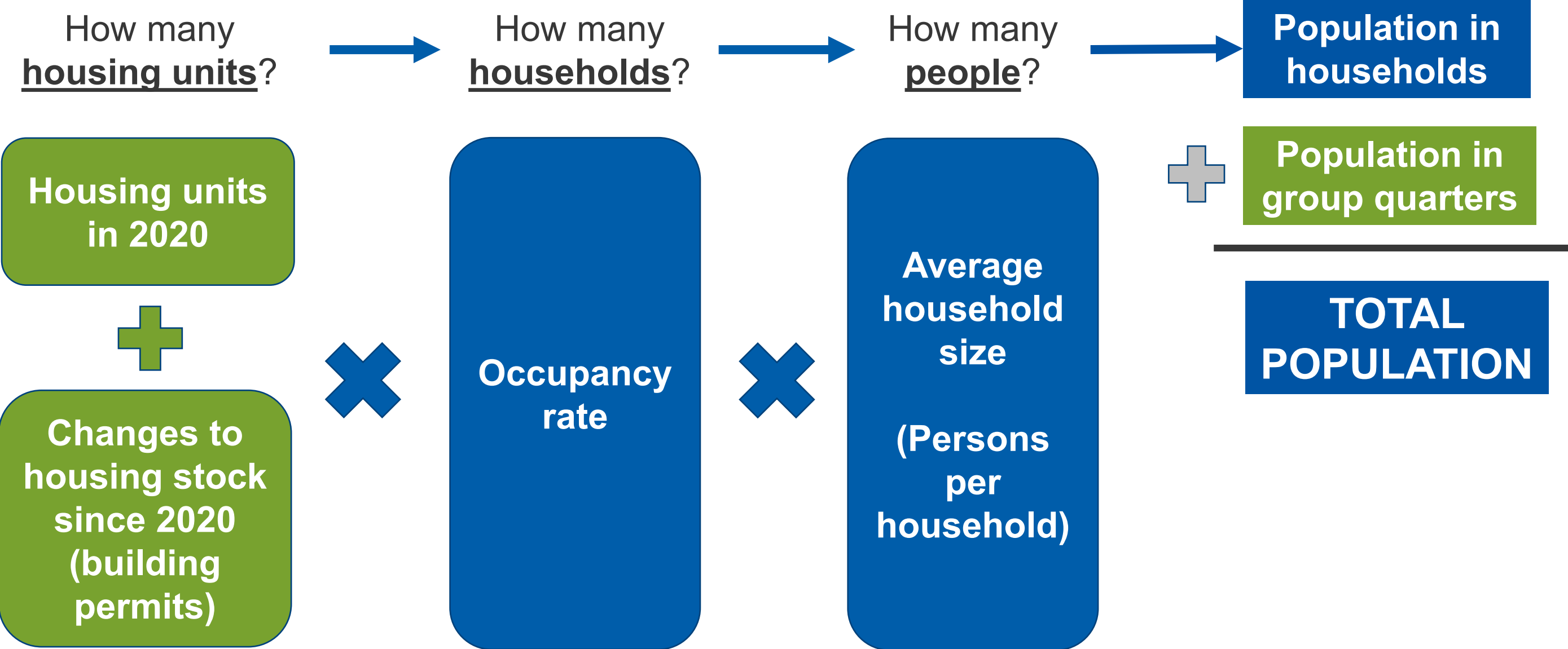
- Local Government Aid
- State Aid for Local Transportation
- Tax-base sharing (Fiscal Disparities)
- Miscellaneous local purposes

Population estimates are governed by Minnesota Statutes [4A.02](#) and [473.24](#).

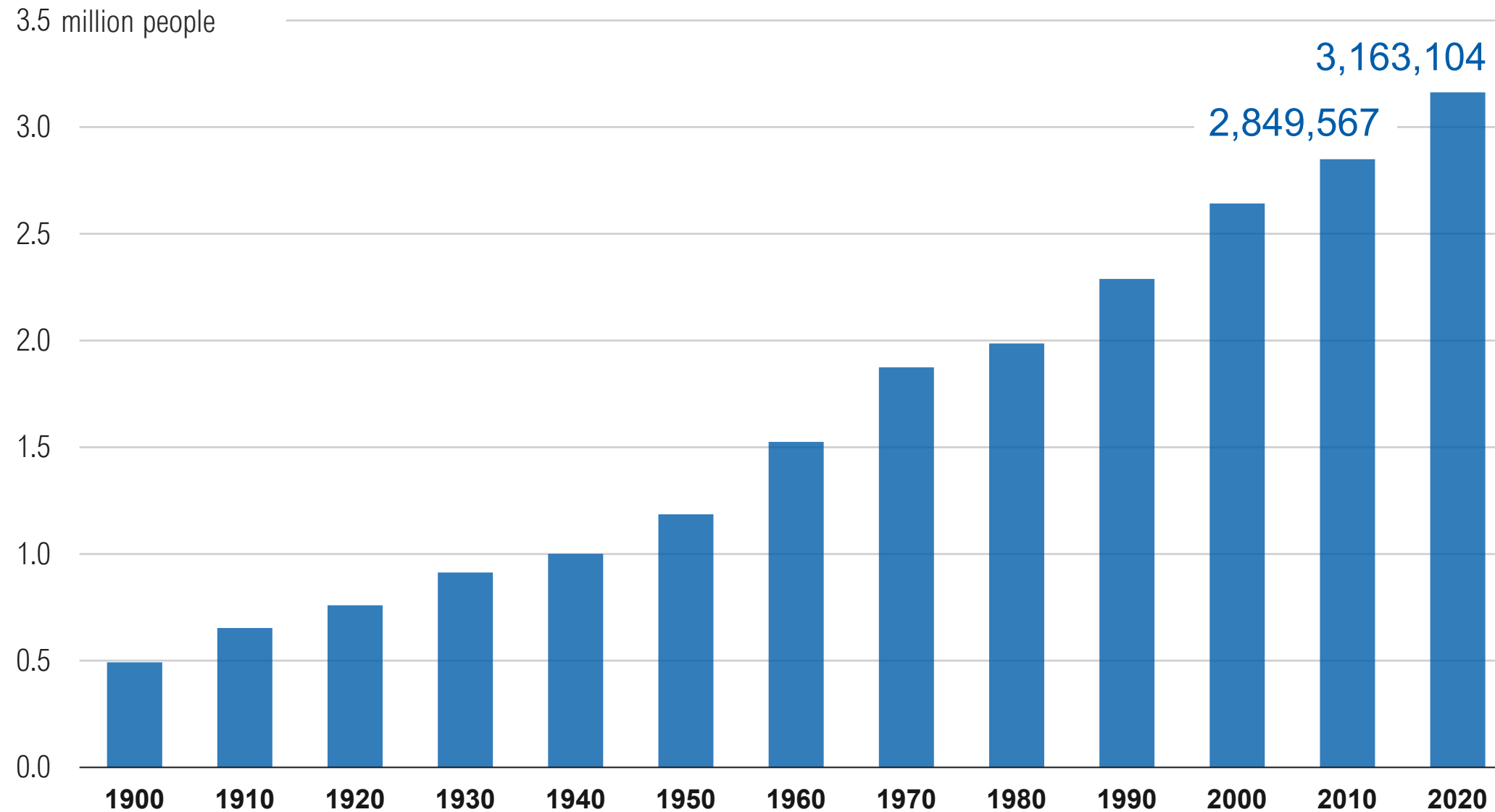
Estimates balance four considerations



How we calculate population estimates



2010-2020: Steady population growth



Between 2010 & 2020, the Twin Cities region's population grew:

+313,537
+11.0%

Source: Metropolitan Council staff analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data. "Twin Cities region" represents all seven counties in the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Council ([Minn. Stat. § 473.121, subd. 2](#))

2022 population estimates



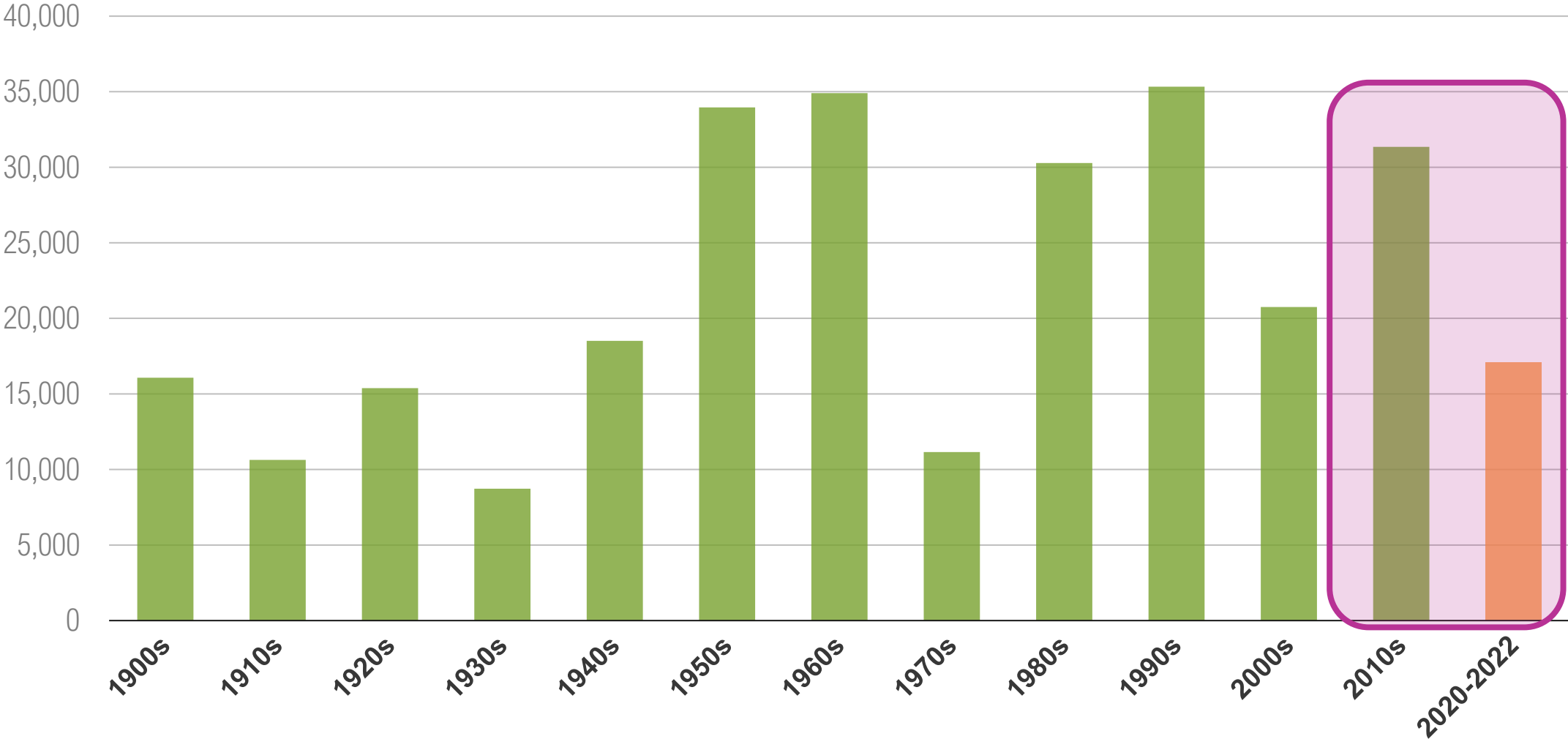
As of April 1, 2022, the Twin Cities region had:

	Estimate for April 1, 2022	Change since 2020 Census	Percent change since 2020 Census
Housing units	1,337,600	+42,737	+3.3%
Households	1,268,485	+28,959	+2.3%
People	3,197,231	+34,127	+1.1%

Source: Metropolitan Council population estimates for April 1, 2022. "Twin Cities region" represents all seven counties in the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Council ([Minn. Stat. § 473.121, subd. 2](#))

Region is still growing, but not as much

Average annual population growth by decade

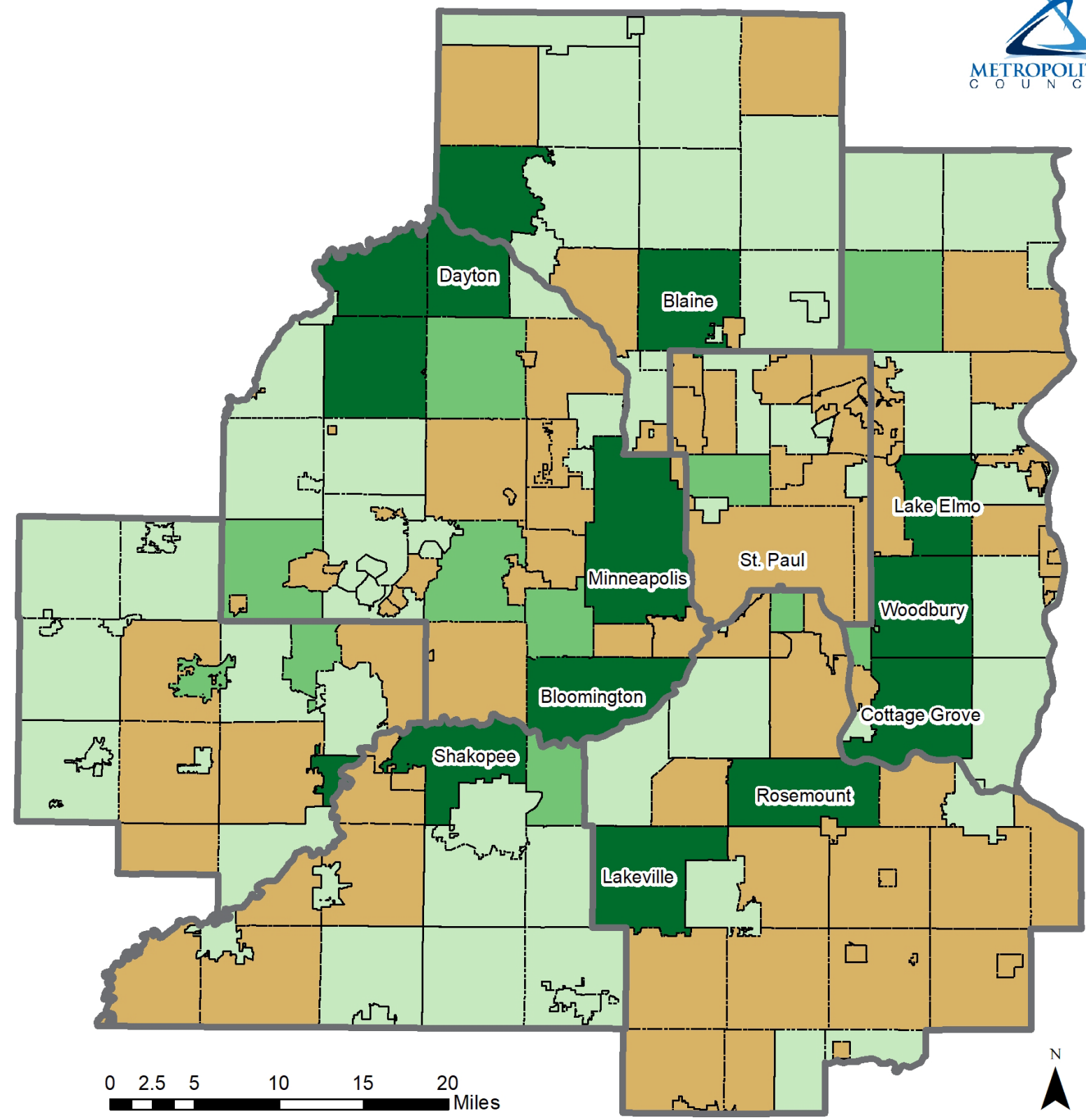
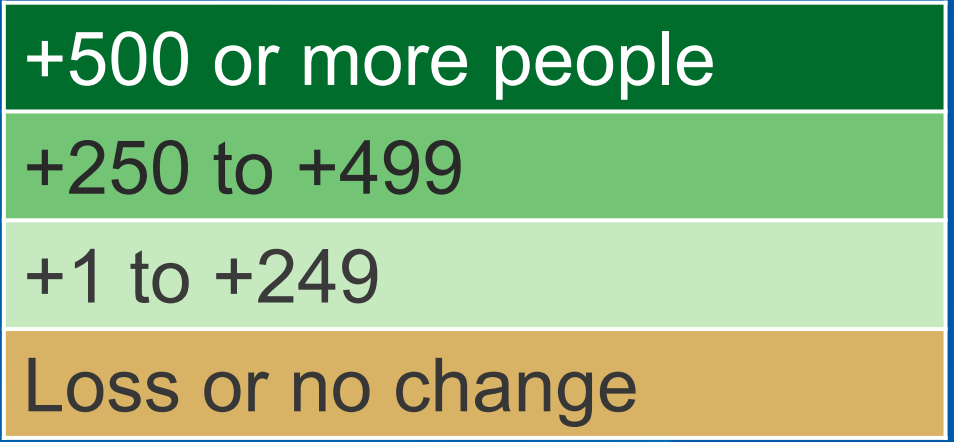


Less annual growth than previous decades

...but the 2010s started out this way too.

Source: Metropolitan Council staff analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data via the National Historical Geographic Information System (NHGIS); Metropolitan Council population estimates for April 1, 2022. "Twin Cities region" represents all seven counties in the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Council (Minn. Stat. § 473.121, subd. 2)

Average annual growth, 2020-2022



Note: Labels identify cities with the ten highest growth numbers as well as Saint Paul (for orientation purposes).

Source: Metropolitan Council staff analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data; Metropolitan Council annual population estimates for April 1, 2022

2020-2022: Growth less spatially balanced

Rural Service Area

Emerging Suburban Edge
& Suburban Edge

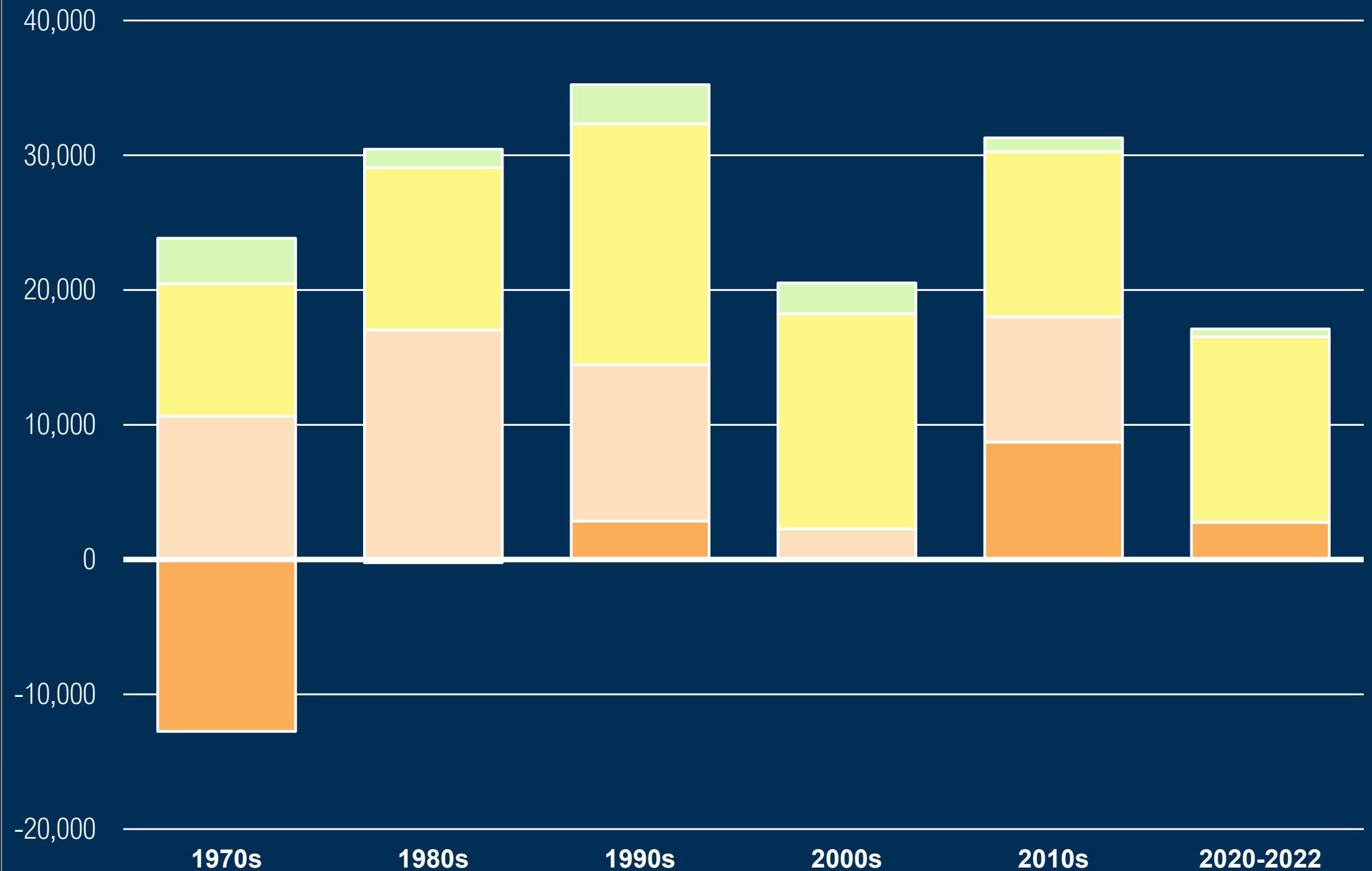
Urban & Suburban

Urban Center

[Click here](#) for a map of Thrive Community Designations

Source: Metropolitan Council staff analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data; Metropolitan Council population estimates for April 1, 2022

Average annual population growth by decade



Average annual population growth rates, 2010-2020

Rapid growth (2% or more)

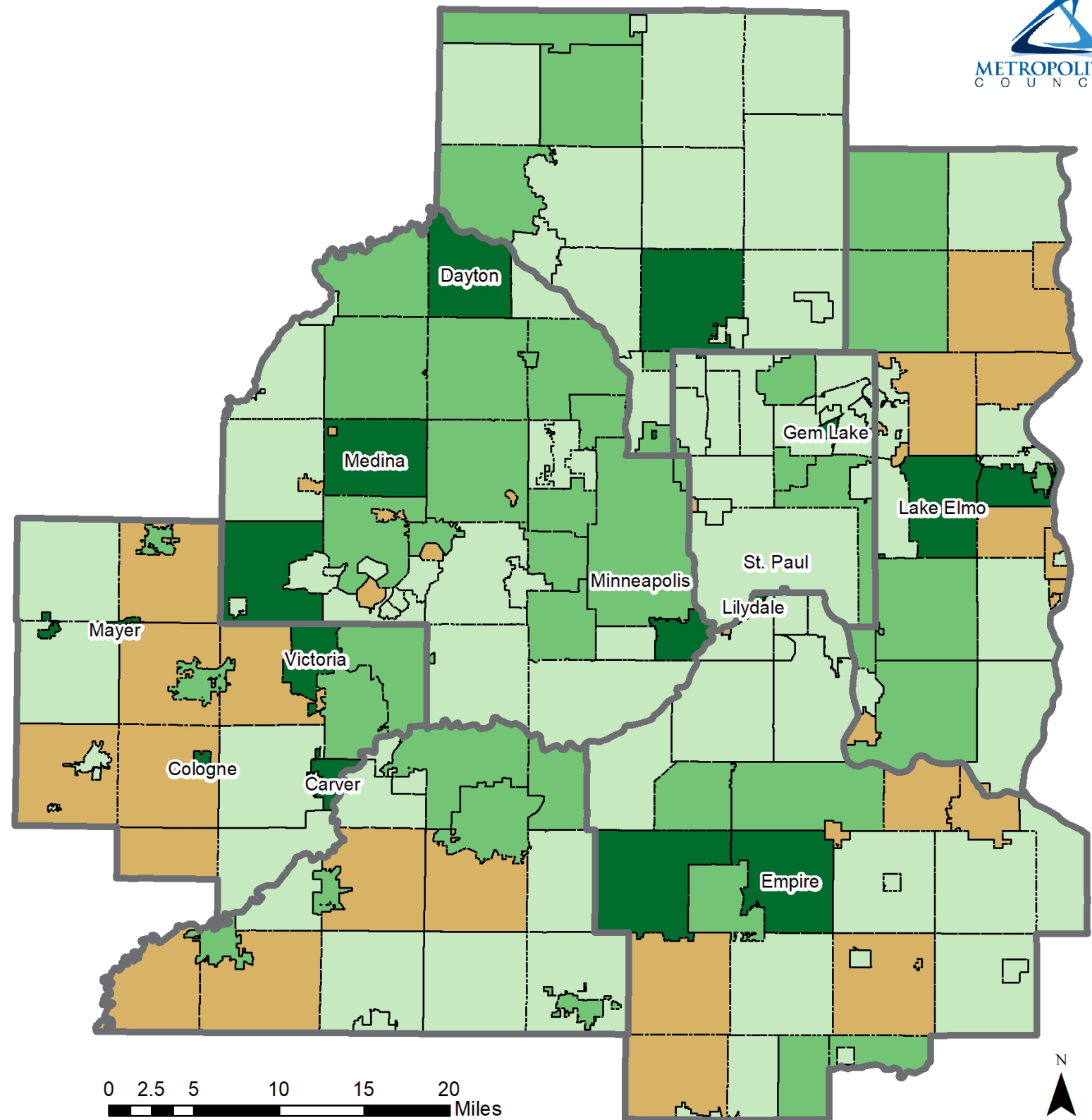
Moderate growth (1%-2%)

Slow growth (under 1%)

Loss or no change

Note: Labels identify cities with the ten highest growth rates as well as Minneapolis and Saint Paul (for orientation purposes).

Source: Metropolitan Council staff analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data



Average annual population growth rates, 2020-2022

Rapid growth (2% or more)

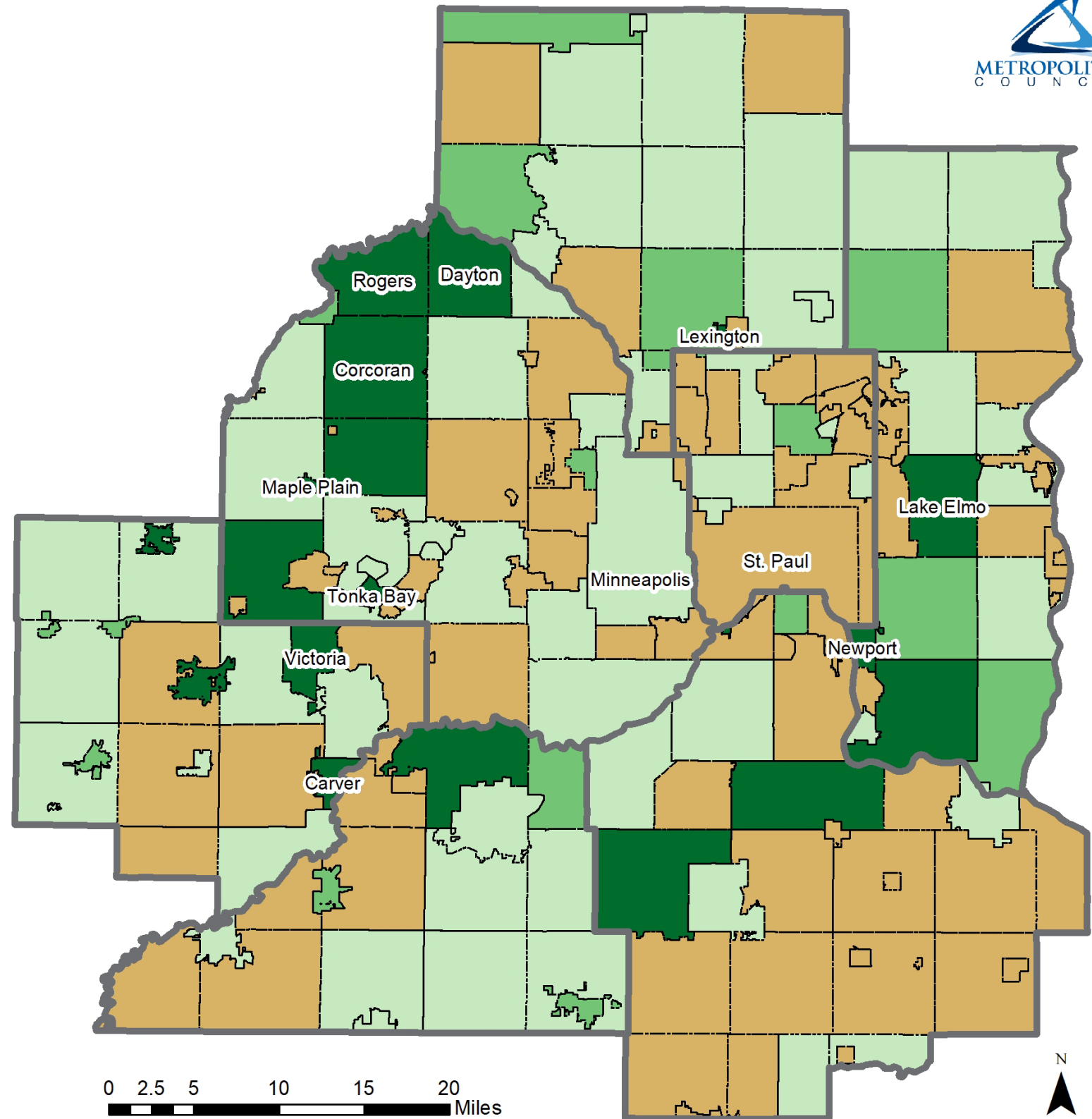
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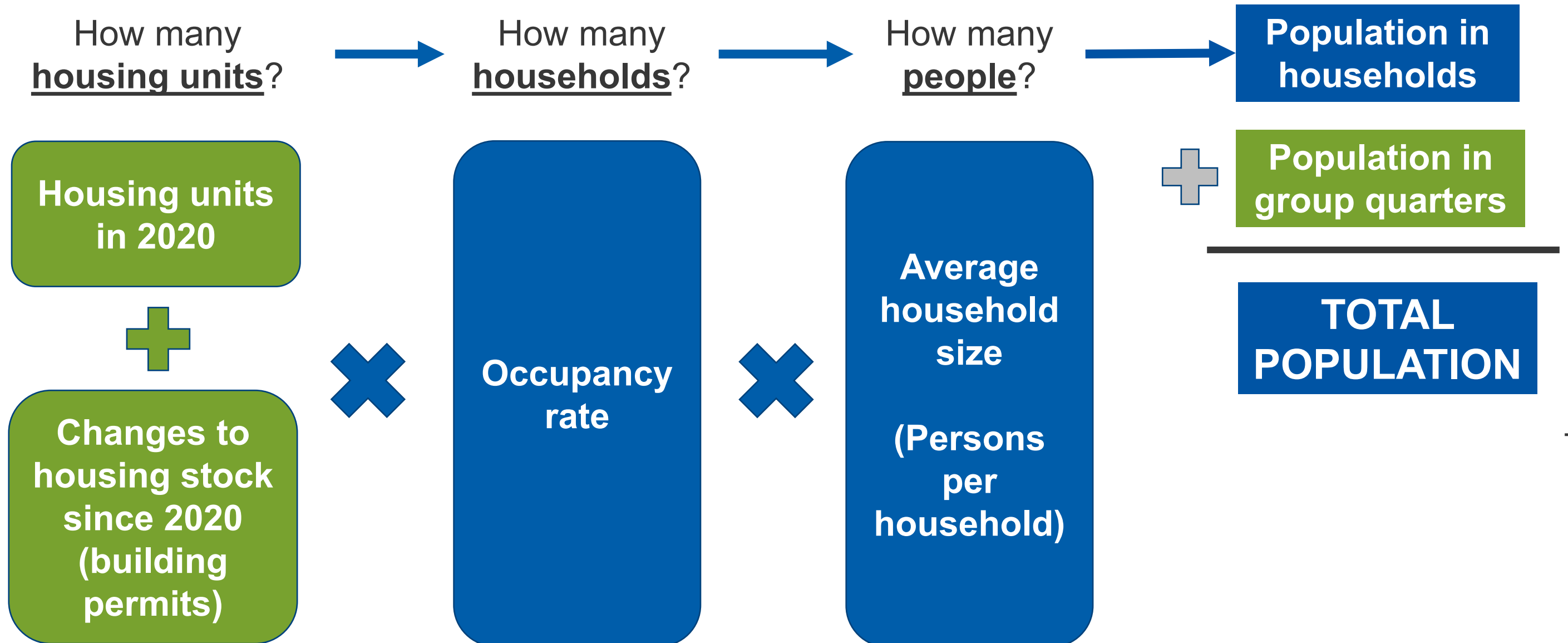
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Note: Labels identify cities with the ten highest growth rates as well as Minneapolis and Saint Paul (for orientation purposes).

Source: Metropolitan Council staff analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data; Metropolitan Council annual population estimates for April 1, 2022



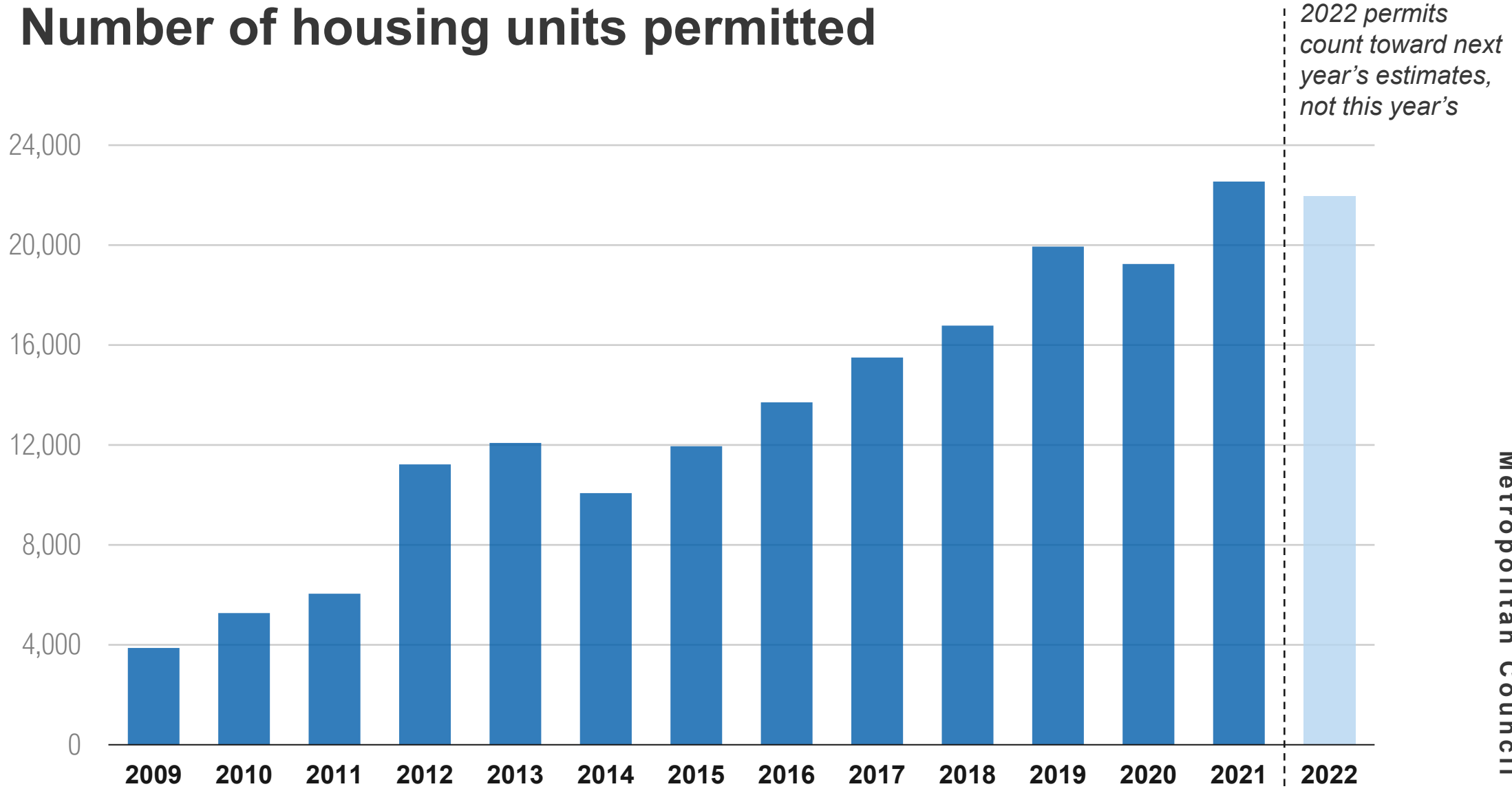
Why the slower growth?



Housing construction remains strong



Number of housing units permitted



Metropolitan Council

Source: Metropolitan Council Residential Building Permit Survey.

Occupancy rates are down since 2020



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Occupancy rates fell from 95.7% in 2020 to 94.8% in 2022.

Source: Metropolitan Council population estimates for April 1, 2022. "Twin Cities region" represents all seven counties in the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Council ([Minn. Stat. § 473.121, subd. 2](#))

Household sizes are down since 2020

COVID effect: births down, deaths up

	2016-2020 annual average	2021-2022 annual average	Summary
Births	38,900	36,300	2,600 fewer births per year
Deaths	(21,200)	(25,200)	4,000 more deaths per year
Net change due to “natural increase”	17,700	11,100	“Natural increase” lower by 6,600 per year

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Resident Population Estimates, Estimated Components of Resident Population Change, and Rates of the Components of Resident Population Change for States and Counties: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2020 and April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2022.

Group quarters are down since 2020

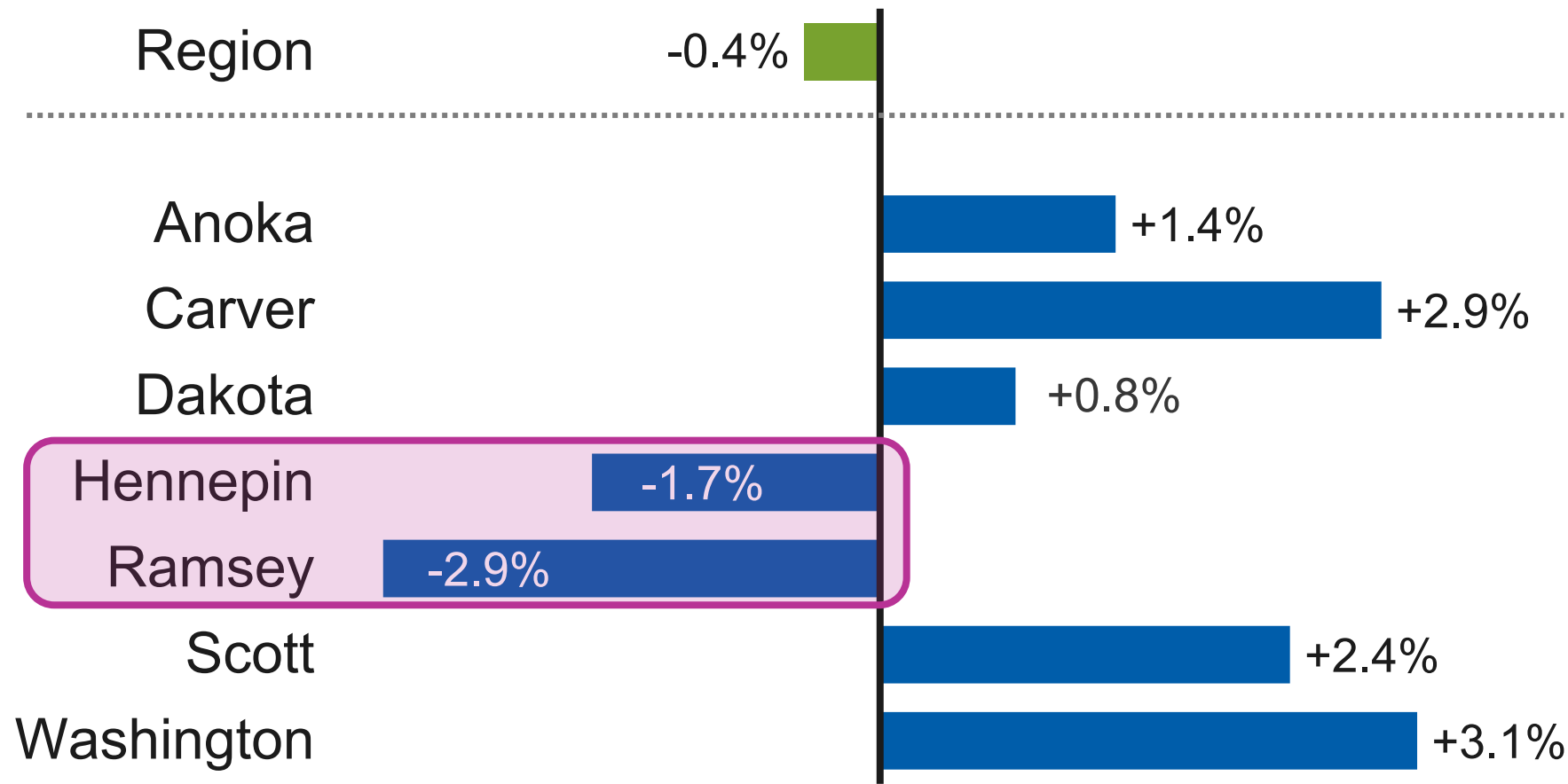
COVID effect: fewer people living in dormitories and prisons

College/university	2020-2022 change
Bethel University	-284
University of Minnesota	-236
St. Catherine University	-221
Augsburg University	-204

State prison	2020-2022 change
Lino Lakes	-351
Stillwater (in Bayport)	-337
Shakopee	-103

Census Bureau: are we losing population?

Census Bureau's estimates of population change for region and counties, 2020-2022



★ StarTribune

Is this the end of the Minneapolis and St. Paul population boom?

The urban core swelled in the 2010s, but two new sets of population estimates indicate that growth in the Twin Cities is slowing down.

By Katie Galioto, Jim Buchta and MaryJo Webster Star Tribune

JUNE 9, 2023 — 12:23PM

The Census Bureau attributed these losses to a large increase in migration out of Hennepin and Ramsey Counties -- but:

- U.S. Postal Service data show a much smaller increase in out-migration.
- It's hard to reconcile this with the strong housing market

2023 population estimates: Possibilities

Faster growth?

- Ongoing record housing construction
- Emerging from pandemic (fewer deaths)

Slower growth?

- Continued decline in multifamily occupancy
- Dropoff in single-family building permits
- Possible recession and cooling of homeownership market

Who knows?

- Developers' responses to housing policy shifts?
- Public health?
- Effects of climate change?



Thank you

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metro council.org/populationestimates

